

Isha Foundation to launch medical van

Staff Reporter

MADURAI: Those living in remote villages in the hilly regions of Batlagundu in Dindigul district need not lose a day's earning anymore to travel to the nearest town for treatment. For help is on its way to their doorstep.

Under its 'Action for Rural Rejuvenation' project, Isha Foundation, a non-profit organisation, intends to provide medical care to people, free of

cost, through a van fitted with the required equipment. It will cover slum areas in Madurai and rural areas up to Batlagundu in Dindigul district.

Talking to reporters here on Saturday, M.P. Uthamraj, project coordinator, said the service would be launched here on Sunday.

As many as 20 such vans were being operated in areas around Coimbatore, Salem, Cuddalore and Chennai. They were also deployed in tsuna-

mi-affected areas.

The crew — a doctor, nurse, pharmacist and driver — would provide both allopathic and homoeopathic treatment. "Through this three-year-old project, we hope to provide basic health-care to places where even buses do not ply," he said. The van would cover at least four villages a day.

Social activities such as creation of awareness of herbs and planting of saplings

would also be organised. The foundation hoped to plant 2.5 crore saplings by October 15; the campaign was already under way in many villages, Mr. Uthamraj said.

As the van could provide only basic care and do only a minor surgery that required no anaesthesia, the foundation had tied up with hospitals in Coimbatore to perform major operations. This system would be considered for Madurai too, he said.